

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This claim listing will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

**Claim Listing:**

- 1-15. (Canceled)
16. (Currently amended) A method for providing a CpG-containing phosphorothioate oligonucleotide with reduced side effects of splenomegaly and depletion of platelets when administered to a mammal, comprising administering to the mammal an oligonucleotide wherein all CpG dinucleotides present in the oligonucleotide are modified, wherein the oligonucleotide is complementary to a portion of a genomic region or gene for which inhibition of expression is desired, or to RNA transcribed from such a gene, and wherein the modified CpG comprises a 2'-O-~~methyl~~ substituted C and/orG.
17. (Currently amended) A method for providing CpG-containing phosphorothioate oligonucleotide with reduced side effects to an individual with a disease caused by aberrant gene expression, the method comprising administering to an individual having the disease an oligonucleotide wherein all CpG dinucleotides present in the oligonucleotide are modified, wherein the oligonucleotide is complementary to a portion of a genomic region or gene that is aberrantly expressed, or to RNA transcribed from such a gene, and wherein the modified CpG comprises a 2'-O-~~methyl~~ substituted C and/orG.
18. (Currently amended) A method for reducing side effects of a CpG-containing phosphorothioate oligonucleotide administered to a mammal, comprising:
- (a) providing a modified CpG-containing phosphorothioate oligonucleotide wherein all the CpG dinucleotides present in the oligonucleotide are modified, and wherein the modified CpG comprises a 2'-O-~~methyl~~ substituted C and/orG; and
  - (b) administering the modified CpG-containing phosphorothioate oligonucleotide to the mammal,

wherein administration of the modified CpG-containing phosphorothioate oligonucleotide results in fewer side effects than the administration of an unmodified CpG-containing phosphorothioate oligonucleotide.